

Remarks/Arguments:

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Claims 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 10, 13, 21, 22, 23, 25, 27, 28, 31, 33, 34, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 41 and 42 have been cancelled.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the opportunity to discuss claims 1 and 37 in view of the cited prior art on November 29, 2005. As noted in the Interview Summary, the proposed amendments to claims 1 and 37 (which are attached to the Interview Summary) have overcome the cited prior art.

Certified Copies of Priority Documents

This application is a U.S. National Phase application of PCT international application PCT/JP99/05509.

The Examiner has not acknowledged receiving certified copies of the priority documents. In the Notice of Acceptance of Application, dated August 10, 2000, by the USPTO as the designated office, the certified copies were listed as received. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner acknowledge receipt of such documents.

Section 103 Rejections

Independent claims 1 and 37 have been rejected as being obvious in view of Shimizu and Kitamura. Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection is overcome for the reasons set forth below.

As noted above, during the Interview conducted on November 29, 2005, Applicants proposed amendments to claims 1 and 37. The Examiner agreed that the proposed amendments have overcome the cited prior art.

Amended claims 1 and 37 are in condition for allowance.

Dependent claims 5, 8-9, 11-12, 14-20, 24, 26, 29-30 and 32 depend from amended claim 1 and are, therefore, also not subject to rejection in view of the cited references. Applicants respectfully submit that these dependent claims are in condition for allowance.

Amendments to Dependent Claims

Because Applicants have cancelled many claims, as noted above, the pending dependent claims have been amended to maintain proper antecedent basis from independent claim 1. No new matter has been added into any of these dependent claims.

Conclusion

This application is now in condition for allowance with the remaining claims 1, 5, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 24, 26, 29, 30, 32 and 37.

Respectfully submitted,



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Dated: December 12, 2005

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The Commissioner for Patents is hereby authorized to charge payment to Deposit Account No. **18-0350** of any fees associated with this communication.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail, with sufficient postage, in an envelope addressed to:
Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on December 12, 2005.

Deborah Spratt

